

floor until they collapse just to preserve their right to offer an amendment on behalf of their State are either confused or being dishonest.

During the Trump administration, reporters routinely sprinkled the word falsely in the descriptions of things that President Trump said as sort of a running fact-check. Reporters ought to revise the practice of using the word falsely when President Biden and other Democrats make demonstrably false statements. This issue, of course, would be a good place to start—and do it this week.

Any reference to some nonexistent, totally mythical age of the talking filibuster ought to have a disclaimer that no such requirement ever existed for a 60-vote cloture rule. As I mentioned, conventional wisdom about the filibuster has been distorted by confusion and perhaps intentional shell games.

For Senators or reporters to truly understand this issue, I urge you to consult the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service as your main source.

RUSSIA

Madam President, on my last topic, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin once famously called the collapse of the Soviet Union “the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.” That ought to tell you very much. He regrets the collapse of the evil empire that killed, that tortured, and that repressed millions of Russians, and he is in the process of trying to reconstitute that empire by threatening Russia’s neighbors, regardless of the wishes of the people he seeks to rule over.

Putin is on the precipice of greatly escalating his war on Ukraine, upset that Ukrainians, as is their right, increasingly seek to leave the Soviet past behind them and reclaim their European heritage. Ukraine wants to renew historic ties with their western neighbor while building democracy and the rule of law.

Now, we saw over the week, particularly this weekend, Putin sending troops into Kazakhstan at the invitation of that country’s allied dictator to repress an unexpected popular uprising.

All this empire building rests on convincing the Russian people that despite their misery and his misrule, Putin is restoring Russia’s past glory, just like they could have a good economic future based on that past glory.

Now, this work of Putin requires a war on history. Putin recently gave a speech absurdly claiming Ukraine is not a real country, based on ignoring—or, rather, Russia’s co-opting—the much older history of civilization in Ukraine.

He has also rehabilitated the memory of the sadistic mass murderer Joseph Stalin. There is a book about how Putin’s Russia views the Stalinist past. Its title says it all. The title of the book is “It Was a Long Time Ago, and It Never Happened Anyway.” Now they have taken action in recent weeks to make sure that history of Russia’s past, particularly the abuse of its popu-

lation, never is known. And I will cover that in just a minute.

Stalin’s horrific crimes against the Russian people are a big obstacle to Putin’s narrative about the Soviet Union, as part of some sort of a proud Russian imperial tradition. So it comes as no surprise that Putin’s regime has forced the closure of a respected Russian human rights organization dedicated to the truth—the truth—about the victims of Soviet communism.

The independent human rights organization known as Memorial was co-founded by Nobel Peace Prize winner Andrei Sakharov in the waning days of the Soviet Union. Sakharov was a brave dissident who risked everything to call attention to the evils of the Soviet system. As some of my colleagues may recall, I led the effort in this U.S. Senate to name the street in front of the old Soviet Embassy in his Honor—Sakharov Plaza.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Sakharov embodied the hope of a brighter, more democratic future for all of Russia, built on understanding and reckoning with its past.

The forced closure of Memorial after decades of noble work to bring awareness and to bring healing around the victims of Soviet communism is emblematic of the state of Putin’s Russia, but not the state of the Russian people. Moreover, the next day, he moved even further in this direction of trying to rewrite history or stop the truth from coming out. Putin shut down the separate but related Memorial Human Rights Center, which focused on political prisoners this very day who are being abused under Putin’s regime. This is a major setback for what is left of Russia’s civil society that started to emerge out of the wreckage of communism.

A robust civil society will be essential if Russia is ever to become a free, prosperous modern nation. Today, only President Putin stands in the way of that accomplishment.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, in recent years, our Democratic colleagues have taken their Washington-knows-best approach to governing to new and, frankly, frightening levels.

Our colleagues have tried to give the IRS unprecedented authority and manpower to snoop into the finances of virtually every American, not just what you make but how you spend your money.

They have attempted to control what type of childcare families can access,

saying that if it is faith-based, that it is not going to qualify for the extravagant subsidies they have proposed, and are driving up the costs for average, hard-working Texas families.

When it comes to our Democratic colleagues and their Washington-knows-best attitude, they have tried to force every person in this country into a one-size-fits-all healthcare system that, yes, government controls. They have argued that the President of the United States has the power to force all Americans, including those in the private sector, to get a vaccine regardless of whether they have naturally occurring antibodies as a result of having gotten COVID-19.

Now, they are mounting a Federal takeover of America’s State-run elections. That is what we will be talking about a lot this week.

As I said, this is consistent with this attitude that Washington knows best, not parents, not teachers, not business owners, not the workers, not even Governors, mayors, sheriffs, city councils, or local election officials. No. Washington knows best, is their attitude.

To state the obvious, that is not how the United States of America was designed under our Constitution. During the time of the founding, there was a lot of discussion of whether to have a national government or whether to have a Federal Government with the States as sovereign entities, subject only to national laws when the Federal Government preempted them with things like the Voting Rights Act, section 5. In fact, our very form of government was designed with checks and balances and dispersed authority primarily to protect the individual freedom of “we the people.”

Our Founders had the wisdom to devise a system of government comprised of three separate branches—coequal—to ensure that no single person or single institution became too powerful because, again, they viewed it as, the more powerful that single entity or single institution became, the less accountable they would be to the people and the less freedom we would have to conduct our own lives as we see fit.

But, as we know, it is not just distributed laterally among the various branches; it is distributed vertically as well. The Constitution makes clear that the States retain all authority not delegated to the Federal Government. That is the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Of course, the power given to the States is sometimes set forth explicitly. For example, the Constitution gives the States the authority to set the time, place, and manner of elections. That is in the Constitution itself. Others are reserved under the Tenth Amendment.

Now, make no mistake, the Federal Government has very, very important responsibilities. When it comes to our national defense, when it comes to regulating interstate commerce, international diplomacy, setting taxes,